



U.S. Air Force

DEP News

by Master Sgt. David Richards

Trusted source

Recruiters serve as the primary source for preparing young men and women for basic military training. From tips on what to pack to what's expected to graduate BMT, recruiters are the most critical link for a successful transition.

Although recruiters are the most trusted source for information, DEPpers also place a great amount of credibility in the Air Force's newest airmen. Below are answers from some of the Air Force's most recent BMT graduates to the most commonly asked questions. **What is it like being away from home?**

It was liberating. I never felt homesick although that was where I spent most of my time. I missed my family

very much, but not to where I would have wanted to leave basic training. Flight 026

Being away from home was a different experience, but it helps you learn how to function without family. Flight 075

It's not too bad. At first you miss everyone, but then you realize that you are grown, and it's time for you to move out. Flight 077

Moving away from home is a necessary transitional step. For some it's easy, and for others it's the most challenging aspect of BMT. Flight 102

What was it like transitioning from civilian to military life?

It was easier than I thought. I liked having structure and liberties given back to me once I earned them. It gave me a chance to learn more about my father's way of doing things when he was in the military. Flight 026

(It was) hard. Most don't like being told when to eat, sleep, brush their teeth, etc. Flight 099

It's totally opposite. At first you are thinking, "What have I done?" Once you get used to it, you feel better about yourself. Flight 077

I didn't really even notice the transition. I thought it was easy. Flight 102

Making the change from civilian to military life requires the blind acceptance of authority. Many young men and women define themselves by defying authority



by Master Sgt. David Richards

For many of the Air Force's newest airmen, the sense of pride and respect.

and, once in the military, they are forced to find new ways of establishing their identity. Flight 102

How were the military training instructors?

I had the world's greatest military training instructor. (He) was the perfect role model. He never appeared before us without shined boots, nice haircut, clean and sharp uniform, and military bearing. We did our jobs right not only for the flight but also for him. Flight 026

The military training instructors in my opinion were simply strict but fair. Flight 075

My MTIs were great, but some seem to like screaming far too much. Flight 099



men, wearing the uniform brings a great

Most of them were cool, laid back, tough when needed. Others were tough and mean all the time. But the tougher they were, the better you came out. Flight 077

At first MTIs are terrifying, and over the course of BMT one's opinion toward them matures into respect, astonishment and eventually gratefulness. Flight 102

What does it mean to wear the uniform?

To wear the uniform represents discipline, devotion and a way of life. It makes me proud and confident. Flight 026

With the uniform comes responsibility and respect. Flight 075

It means a lot. It makes you think about what you have accom-

plished and (what) you have sacrificed. Flight 099

Pride in the fact that you are part of the world's greatest air power. Flight 077

The Air Force uniform instills pride and dignity. I feel that I walk taller when wearing it. Flight 102

What did you find out about yourself in BMT?

I found out that I have leadership abilities. I found out that I have more willpower and discipline than I thought. Flight 026

I work well with a team, and I have to work on taking directions better. Flight 099

I had more discipline than I thought, and I learned to think for myself. Flight 077

I found out that I am tougher, more confident than I ever have been. Flight 077

I can keep pushing, work harder each and every day. Flight 102

If you really wanted to perform well (you) could if you set yourself up to do so. Flight 101

What is the dining facility like?

It was refreshing because, although there was a chance of being called to the MTI table, you sit down with your friends and communicate through eye contact and head nods. Flight 026

The food is great. But there isn't enough time to eat. Flight 099

It's a fast pace and good food. Flight 077

The dining facility causes me to feel as though I am eating in a war zone. The yelling, smashing and shattering reverberates off everything, and it requires focus and attention to overlook. Flight 102

How did BMT prepare you for the future?

I know how I will be expected to look and act during my Air Force career. Flight 026

I'm better prepared to take on tasks and get things accomplished. Flight 099

It gave me confidence that I can do anything I want. Flight 077

Mentally, physically and emotionally, I'm stronger in all aspects, and that's a big thing when I am going to war or even just out in the real world. Flight 101

How challenging was the confidence course?

I didn't think it was very challenging, but I really enjoyed it. It was the most fun part of Warrior Week. Flight 026

Not as challenging as I thought it would be. Flight 077

The confidence course was way too easy for people who are physically fit. Flight 102

How physically prepared were you for BMT?

I ran four to five days a week in preparation for it. I did push myself harder here. On my own I would stop, but I never walked during any run. Flight 026

I was prepared mostly, but once



The confidence course proved to be less of a challenge than most expected.

I got here, I realized I wasn't mentally prepared. Flight 099

I was prepared, but I did not expect BMT to be as physical as it was. Flight 077

I weight trained regularly and I came in more fit than most. Flight 102

I started working out three months before BMT, but not a whole lot. So, it took me half the time to get into the shape I needed to be in. Flight 101

Editor's Note: Answers were compiled by Capt. Brian Dunavan of the 326th Training Squadron at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

Achievement earns Eagle Scout promotion

by Staff Sgt. Michael O'Connor
319th Recruiting Squadron

An early 2004 graduate of Maine's Brewer High School and Air Force trainee earned Scouting's highest rank during a Boy Scouts Court of Honor ceremony in January. Along with earning his recent promotion with Scouting, the achievement also earned him a promotion to E-2 upon graduation from basic military training just two weeks shy of leaving for Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

Bill Theriault, 18, earned the rank of Eagle Scout upon

courtesy photo



completion of a community service project. He and the members of Troop 23 raised money that went toward purchasing materials needed to repair the stage and curtain of a local community hall used by the troop.

"So far, earning Eagle Scout is the most significant accomplishment of my life," said Mr. Theriault, who began Scouting in first grade. "I chose this project because I wanted to give something back to a place (that) has given my troop so much."

As part of the award presentation ceremony Jan. 18, his recruiter, Staff Sgt. Sherry Thomas, presented him with a Certificate of Recognition signed by the Air Force secretary and chief of staff.

Mr. Theriault departed for BMT Feb. 3. Upon successful completion, he'll train to become an explosive ordnance disposal apprentice.

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U.S. Air Force's *Future Force*

Kyle Konkolics

Hometown: Wrightstown, N.J.

Date of Birth: July 5, 1986

Recruiter: Tech. Sgt.

Cassandra Richards

High school and mascot:

Northern Burlington Greyhounds

Date departing for BMT:

July 6

Future Air Force job: Flight engineer

Favorite music group: Nirvana

Favorite CD: Blind Melon

Favorite magazine: Men's Health

Last book read: Heavier Than Heaven: A Biography of Kurt Cobain

Favorite TV program: "The Kids in the Hall"

Favorite Web site: www.gamefaqs.com

Favorite video game: Final Fantasy III

Hottest car: Pontiac Firebird

Vacation choice? Any tropical place

What movie have you seen more than five times? "Jerry Maguire"

Personal motto: Everything happens for a reason.

If you could hang out with one person for an entire day, who would it be and why? My girlfriend, because we have fun when we hang out together.

How does your family feel about you entering the Air Force? My family is proud and excited.

Why the Air Force? I feel the Air Force offers a great deal of opportunities for young adults, and my dream is to fly.

Hobbies: Playing guitar and being lead guitar in a rock band

by Tech. Sgt. John Konkolics





by Airman 1st Class Franklin J. Perkins

Fighting Falcon

The F-16 Fighting Falcon is a compact, multi-role fighter aircraft. It's highly maneuverable and has proven itself in air-to-air combat and air-to-surface attack. It provides a relatively low-cost, high-performance weapon system for the United States and allied nations.

In an air combat role, the F-16's maneuverability and combat radius exceed that of all potential threat fighter aircraft. In an air-to-surface role, the F-16 can fly more than 500 miles, deliver its weapons with superior accuracy, defend itself against enemy aircraft, and return to its starting point.

General Characteristics

Primary Function: Multi-role fighter

Builder: Lockheed Martin Corp.

Thrust: F-16C/D, 27,000 pounds

Length: 49 feet, 5 inches

Height: 16 feet

Wingspan: 32 feet, 8 inches

Speed: 1,500 mph

Ceiling: Above 50,000 feet

Range: More than 2,000 miles

Armament: One M-61A1 20 mm multibarrel cannon with 500 rounds; external stations can carry up to six air-to-air missiles, conventional air-to-air and air-to-surface munitions and electronic countermeasure pods

Unit cost: F-16A/B, \$14.6 million;

F-16C/D, \$18.8 million

Crew: F-16C, one; F-16D, one or two

Date Deployed: January 1979



Air Force students at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., may have the chance to view space launches such as this Lockheed Martin-built Titan IV B rocket.

Training on Target

Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.

The 381st Training Group, located on an 80-acre site at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., provides qualification training for intercontinental ballistic missile, space surveillance, missile warning, spacelift and satellite command and control operators.

It also provides initial and advanced maintenance training on air-launched missiles and ICBMs. In addition, the group conducts training in joint space fundamentals and associated computer maintenance.

The group consists of five squadrons. One squadron provides student support while the other four are dedicated to student training.

For more information on Vandenberg, visit www.vandenberg.af.mil.

Santa Maria Profile



Location: Southern California
Population: 77,423
Avg. High Temps: 64-75
Avg. Low Temps: 39-54
Avg. Annual Rainfall: 14.01 inches